CALUMET & HECLA MINING COMPANY, SUPERIOR BOILERHOUSE
Mine Street
Calumet
Houghton County
Michigan

HABS MI-429
MI-429

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

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CALUMET AND HECLA MINING COMPANY, SUPERIOR BOILERHOUSE

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Location: Adjacent to Mine Street, between Red Jacket Road and Church Street, in Calumet, Houghton County, Michigan. The Boilerhouse is one of about twenty early Calumet and Hecla Company buildings included in the 36-acre industrial district. Most of the structures were erected in the 1880s and are located along either side of a line of former mine shafts. Until 1939, these industrial buildings served as the center of mining, administrative, and maintenance for the company.

Present Owner: At the time of the industrial district nomination (1974-77), the boilerhouse was owned by the Houghton County Road Commissioners. The chain of title information is as follows:

Essentially the property in question has been owned by the Calumet and Hecla Company, its successor firms, up to and including Universal Oil Products and now UOP has sold the properties below to the Board of County Road Commissioners of Houghton County, Michigan, and the Board of Education of the Public Schools of Calumet.

The 4.78 acres with which the Road Commissioners end up is the site on which the boiler and engine houses stand. The remaining acreage is adjacent, to the south, of this parcel.

The following transactions were made because of the provision of the Michigan Plat Act, which prohibits selling a parcel of less than ten (10) acres unless it has been subdivided. Thus UOP sold over twelve acres to the Board of Education and then the Board of Education and the Board of Road Commissioners gave each other Quit Claim deeds, renouncing all right in the acreage desired by the other.

December 4, 1974 L 41, p. 413 of Deeds
Universal Oil Products Corporation, a Delaware corporation headquartered in Des Plaines, Illinois.
WARRANTY DEED - to -
The Board of Education of the Public Schools of Calumet
For $10.00 ($30.80 in tax stamps = $28,000)

12.84 acres, less 0.09 acres owned by the Northern Michigan Water Company, located in part of the SE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 13 of Township 56 N, Range 33 W.

December 26, 1974 L 41, p. 417 of Deeds
Board of County Road Commissioners of Houghton County, Michigan.
QUIT CLAIM DEED - to -
The Board of Education of the Public Schools of Calumet
For $14,038.72 (tax stamps $15.95)
8.06 acres of the above described parcel, less the 0.09 acres of the water company.

December 26, 1974 L 41, p. 419 of Deeds
Board of Education of the Public Schools of Calumet.
QUIT CLAIM DEED -to-
Board of County Road Commissioners of Houghton County, Michigan
For $14,038.72 (tax stamps $15.95)
4.78 acres, upon which are located the Superior Engine and Boiler houses.

Present Occupant: Presumed vacant.

Notes: The Superior Boilerhouse was designed by Erasmus D. Leavitt, Jr., an engineer, and built by the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company's construction department in the 1880s to supply steam to the nearby Superior Enginehouse.[1] In 1894 or 1895, the north addition or "New Boilerhouse" was attached to the structure. The original part of the Superior Boilerhouse was made of coursed rubble masonry and covered by a steeply pitched, hip roof sheathed in corrugated sheet metal. The construction crew used queen-rod wood trusses with 1 ¼" and 1 5/8" inch rods; 6" x 6", 8" x 8", and 10" x10" braces with 12" x 12" bottom chords and 10" x 10" top chords. The trusses were supported by 8" x 10" purlins and 2" x 8" rafters placed 20" on center. The building footprint measured about 60' x 77'. The adjacent brick smokestack stood 150' tall. Leavitt also designed the New Boilerhouse, which was rectangular in plan (69' x 154') and fashioned from Lake Superior red sandstone rubble walls and covered by a gable roof. Trusses

[1] Note: There are Calumet and Hecla engineers' drawings at the Smithsonian Institution, Museum of History and Technology, as well as in the Calumet and Hecla archives. It is possible that the Calumet and Hecla archives has permanently loaned the Smithsonian all the drawings. –vbp.

In the 1891 "Summary of the Operations of the Calumet and Hecla Mining Co[mpany]," company officials announced that the Boilerhouse and its accompanying stack were built during the "past year. The building is ready for the boilers." See p. 1.

for the north addition were 8 panel chambered fink trusses composed of 4" x 1 ¼" tie bars, 3 ½" x 5/8" tensions bars. And laced angles compression members with chord pins and washers at all joints. The principal rafters were composed of 12" channels, 5/16" plates and 2 ¼" x 5/16" lacing. The purlins were 8" "I" with 2" x10" wood sheathing and corrugated roof covering.[2]

Sources: Charles K. Hyde and Diane B. Abbot, The Upper Peninsula of Michigan: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites (Washington: Historic American Engineering Record, 1978, cited in "Calumet and Hecla Industrial District," Nomination form 1974, 1977, National Register for Historic Places, National Park Service.

"Coppertown USA." Prepared for UOP Realty Development Company by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc., 1972.

Historians: The summer historians were Kevin Harrington and Wendy Nicholas, who worked for the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record on the Calumet area survey in 1975.

[2] Charles K. Hyde and Diane B. Abbot, The Upper Peninsula of Michigan: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites (Washington: Historic American Engineering Record, 1978, cited in "Calumet and Hecla Industrial District," Nomination form 1974, 1977, National Register for Historic Places, National Park Service; "Coppertown USA" prepared for UOP Realty Development Company by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc., 1972, pp. 48-49. Notes on the trusses copied from the historians' file – vbp, 02/2002.

Fig. 1 Exterior view. Photo by Harrington & Nicholas, 1975.